

8-2016

The 30th Anniversary Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival: An Internship Academic Report

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The 30th Anniversary Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival

An Internship Academic Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Arts Administration

by

Maria Plotkina

B.A. Stony Brook University, 2014

August, 2016

Table of Contents

List of Figures	iv
Abstract	v
Introduction	1
Organizational Profile	2
Mission Statement	2
History & Background	2
Organizational Structure	3
Organizational Budget	7
Programming Overview.....	9
Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival.....	9
Saints and Sinners Literary Festival	11
The Writing Contests.....	11
writeNOW Educational Outreach Program.....	12
Coffee and Conversation	12
Internship Description	13
S.W.O.T. Analysis	21
Strengths.....	22
Dedicated supporters and participants.....	22
Merger with Saints and Sinners Festival	22
30-year longevity as an organization	22
Network within the New Orleans community	23
Weaknesses.....	24
Aging patron base	24
Complicated ticketing options for Festival events	24
Inconsistent support from board of directors	25
Internal miscommunication and tension	25
Opportunities	26

Uptick in support for education-based programs	26
Partnerships with organizations that target a younger audience	26
Increased interest in festivals on a larger scale	27
Stabilization of staffing model	27
Threats	28
Louisiana budget crisis	28
Addition of non-profit sales tax	29
Constant expansion of festival market in New Orleans	29
Best Practices	30
Audience Expansion and Engagement	30
Ticketing and Database Technology	32
Board of Directors and Governance	35
Improvement of Office Culture	37
Recommendations	40
Audience Expansion	40
Ticketing & Memberships	42
Board of Directors Overhaul	44
Internal Communication	46
Conclusion	48
Works Cited	49
Appendices	54
Appendix A: Staff List and Welcome Letter from Program	54
Appendix B: Schedule of Events for 2016 Festival	55
Appendix C: Example of Sponsor Spotlight E-Newsletter	57
Appendix D: Example of Marketing E-Newsletter	61
Appendix E: Example of Marketing Collage	65
Appendix F: 2015-2016 Projected Budget	66
Vita	67

List of Figures

Figure 1: Organizational Chart	6
Figure 2: 2015-2016 Funding Pie.....	8
Figure 3: S.W.O.T. Analysis.....	21

Abstract

This report presents a reflection and analysis of my internship with the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, where I completed 480 hours of work in pursuit of the M.A. in Arts Administration. I worked primarily with Tracy Ferrington Cunningham, Director of Communications & Special Events, in preparing and organizing the 2016 Festival, which represented the organization's 30th anniversary. In this report, I will deliver an organizational overview of the Festival, describe my internship duties and responsibilities, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, and provide best practices and recommendations in festival management.

Introduction

The Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival was founded in 1986 by a group of theater enthusiasts in New Orleans. Over the past thirty years of its history, the Festival has grown from a small community event to a massive weekend celebration of the literature, history, and culture of New Orleans. The Festival spends most of the year preparing for the annual weekend event, which usually takes place in late March or early April. In the months leading up to the Festival, staff members are hard at work soliciting donations and grants, planning theater collaborations, and scheduling the diverse roster of speakers, authors, and guests who appear at the event. The final product is a weekend of plays, concerts, panels, literary master classes, readings, food tastings, and other special events that draw a dedicated crowd from both New Orleans and the rest of the United States.

I joined the organization as an intern in August 2015 in preparation for the 30th Anniversary iteration of the Festival. I was drawn to the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival as my internship host organization due to its impressive reputation in the community and its multidisciplinary approach to celebrating the diversity of art forms found in New Orleans. Additionally, the Festival was able to offer me a flexible schedule where I worked for eight months, from August to April, which allowed me to participate in the entire life cycle of putting on the Festival from beginning to end.

Organizational Profile

Mission Statement

“The Festival’s mission is threefold: to serve the community through educational, theatrical, literary, and musical programs; to nurture, support, and showcase regional, national and international writers, actors, musicians, and other artists; to honor the creative genius of Tennessee Williams, who considered this city his spiritual home.” ¹

History & Background

The Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival was founded in 1986 in the French Quarter of New Orleans by supporters of local culture. The first Festival weekend attracted a small but committed audience of 500, with all programming taking place at Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre, a longstanding partner of the organization. In 2016, the Festival celebrated its 30 year anniversary. In this time frame, the Festival has grown to fill over 10,000 seats at over 10 venues and restaurants throughout the French Quarter. In 2015, the Tennessee Williams Festival incorporated the Saints and Sinners Literary Festival into its weekend of programming. The Saints and Sinners Festival, founded in 2003, is a festival celebrating the LGBT literary community. This merger has both expanded the reach of the Tennessee Williams Festival and added fresh and creative ideas to the typical Festival roster.

¹ “About the Festival.” *Tennessee Williams Festival*. Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, n.d. Web. 15 May 2016.

The Tennessee Williams Festival, a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, brings together theater, literature, music, history, and the culinary arts in an effort to reflect and appreciate the culture of the city of New Orleans. While Tennessee Williams and his catalogue of works continue to serve as a touchstone for Festival programming, the Festival has expanded far beyond solely celebrating this single playwright. Through the incorporation of writing contests, educational outreach, and site-specific programs, the Festival seeks to celebrate both the local literary culture of the South and literary trends on a national scale.²

Organizational Structure

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival (TW/NOLF) operates with a small staff working alongside a board of directors. The board of directors provides oversight and guidance for the governance and fiscal management of the Festival, while the staff carries out the daily operations and activities of the Festival. Both parties advise and share ideas with each other. The office of the TW/NOLF is based in the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities building, at 938 Lafayette Street in the Central Business District of New Orleans. The LEH provides discounted rent and additional in-kind support to the organization in addition to offering grant options. Monthly board meetings and executive committee meetings are also held in a conference room at the LEH building.

As of the 2016 Festival, the Festival board of directors numbers 27.³ On top of this number, there are four advisory board members. Board members are elected to

² Ibid.

³ See Appendix A for full list of board members.

three-year terms, though renewal is possible once each term is over.⁴ The current board officers are Janet Daley Duval, Board President; Amelia W. Koch, Vice President; Terry Verigan, Treasurer; and Mamie Sterkx Gasperecz, Secretary. Additionally, David Johnson serves as the Literary Programming Liaison while Peggy Scott Laborde, one of the founding board members, serves as the Theater Programming Liaison. The 2015-2016 fiscal year is Ms. Duval's last year as Board President, and at the end of the year Ms. Koch will be taking on this responsibility.

The staff operates with a small full-time staff of three. Paul J. Willis, the Executive Director, has been with the Festival since 2004. Paul is also the founder of the Saints and Sinners Festival, which has existed since 2003 and recently merged with the TW/NOLF. Paul began his work in the nonprofit administration field in 1992, when he served as the co-director of the Holos Foundation in Minneapolis, which operated an alternative high school for at-risk youth. As Executive Director, Paul administers and delegates tasks for all aspects of the Festival, including programming, development, marketing, and finance.

The Director of Literary Programs for the TW/NOLF is J.R. Ramakrishnan. She is responsible for crafting the roster of panels, master classes, readings, and talks that form the core of each Festival. J.R. also assists with grant-writing and development and serves as the main point of contact for the Festival's presenters and participants. J.R. is a journalist and published author whose journalism and fiction has appeared in publications ranging from *Harper's Bazaar* to *Mixed Company*.

⁴ "2015-2016 Board Book." Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival 2015. Print. Internal Document.

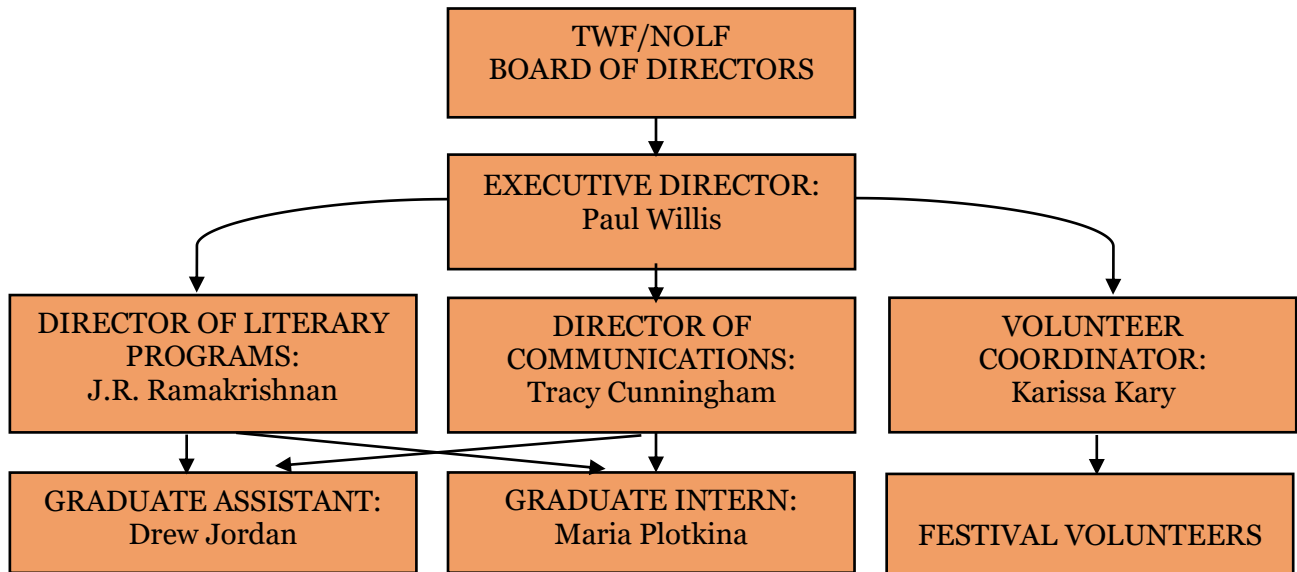
The Festival's Director of Communications and Special Events is Tracy Ferrington Cunningham. The 2016 Festival was Tracy's first year in this role. Prior to joining the staff, Tracy served on the board of directors as Secretary. Tracy has extensive experience as an educator and administrator and also runs an event management company. In her role, Tracy is responsible for marketing, communications, special event planning, and a large amount of development. She also oversees daily financial and office management activities.⁵

In addition to the three full-time staff members, the Festival employs several other individuals on a part-time or contract basis. In the 2015-2016 year, the Festival had two graduate students from the University of New Orleans in the office part-time: Drew Jordan, a graduate assistant from the Creative Writing program, and myself. Another graduate student, Marian Kaufman, spearheaded social media efforts for the year. Other employees include Karissa Kary, who serves as volunteer coordinator and on-site support during the Festival; Dominique Ellis, the Festival Publicist; Ellen Johnson, Media Adviser; Bruce Campbell, Technical Director; and Cherry Cappel, Web Master. Other individuals are hired occasionally throughout the year to assist with special projects as needed. ⁶Leading up to and during the actual Festival weekend, a large roster of volunteers joins the organization to provide on-site assistance and labor.

⁵ "About the Festival."

⁶ See Appendix A for full list of staff members involved in the 2016 Festival.

Figure 1: Organizational Chart



Organizational Budget

The fiscal year of the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival begins on July 1 of any given year and ends on June 30 of the following year. I was able to obtain a copy of the projected 2015-2016 overall budget from Tracy, my supervisor, and drew numbers for past years from the Form 990s available online.⁷⁸ The projected revenue for the 2015-2016 year is \$405,250, comprising a combination of grants, ticket sales, memberships, contest fees, and fundraisers. For the 2014-2015 year, the actual revenue totaled \$330,123. This projected increase of about \$75,000 is explained through the securing of several new grants, the addition of a new online auction as a fall fundraiser, and a huge membership campaign for the Festival's 30th anniversary. The funding chart on the following page demonstrates a breakdown of 2015-2016 funding sources, listed in decreasing order for easy comparison. Ticket sales, foundation support, and the membership campaign comprise the majority of revenue, coming in at 66% together. The smallest revenue sources include concession sales, university support, standard donations, and city grants.

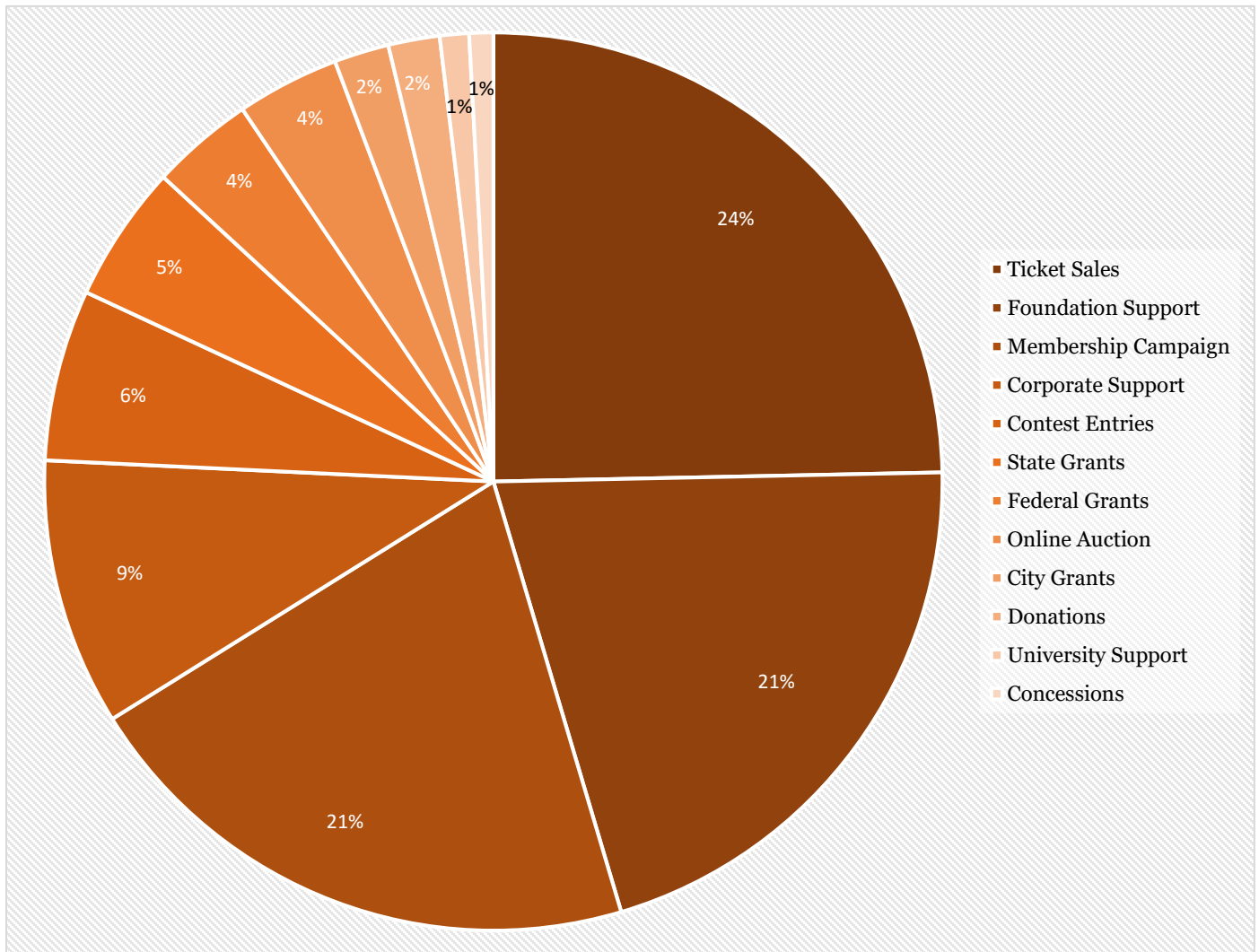
The projected expenses for 2015-2016 total \$396,830, broken down into salaries and payroll fees, travel and hotel expenses for festival participants, rent and utilities, marketing and printing fees, and other miscellaneous expenses. In comparison, the actual expenses for 2014-2015 totaled \$344,105. The increase in projected expenses is explained by higher salary spending and increased fees, travel costs, and equipment rental. While the actual numbers for the 2014-2015 year reveal a loss of \$13,982,

⁷ "Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival Budget 2015 - 2016 Fiscal Year." Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival 2016. Print. Internal Document.

⁸ "Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival 2014 Form 990." *GuideStar*. GuideStar, 2015. Web. 15 May 2016.

primarily due to less corporate support and fewer contest fees than projected, the projected numbers for the 2015-2016 year predict a net revenue of \$8,420.

Figure 2: 2015-2016 Funding Pie



Programming Overview

The programs of the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival are centered around the main annual Festival, which takes place over the course of the final weekend in March. The 2016 Festival took place between Wednesday, March 30, and Sunday, April 3. In addition to the main events of the Festival weekend, there are several offshoot and auxiliary programs that seek to enhance the Festival experience. These include the Saints and Sinners Literary Festival, the annual writing contests, the writeNOW educational outreach program, and the Coffee and Conversation library program. Because TW/NOLF is such a small organization, there are no traditional departments, and all staff members are involved in creating all programming each year.

Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival

The centerpiece of the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival is the Festival weekend itself, which features dozens of events over the course of about four days. While the Festival has evolved significantly since 1986, the past few years have followed a similar formula in terms of programming. Most events take place at several closeby venues in the French Quarter, with the Hotel Monteleone serving as Festival headquarters. In 2016, the kickoff for the event was a special event on the evening of Wednesday, March 30, at Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre, which featured Mary Badham (Scout from the film *To Kill A Mockingbird*) interviewed by author Rick Bragg.

On Thursday and Friday during the Festival, a series of Master Classes are held at the Historic New Orleans Collection. These classes are led by renowned literary professionals, who in 2016 included Tom Piazza, Megan Abbott, and Dorothy Allison. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, panel discussions on a diverse array of topics led by

literary, theater, and cultural professionals are held at several venues, which include the Hotel Monteleone, Muriel's Restaurant, the Palm Court Jazz Café, and the Williams Research Center of the Historic New Orleans Collection. The Friday day of panels at the Williams Research Center forms the Scholars Conference, which features discussions by academics on research subjects related to Tennessee Williams. Literary walking tours are held at regular intervals throughout the weekend.

Theater events are held throughout the weekend at various venues, some produced by the Festival itself and some created in partnership with local theaters. The Southern Rep Theatre is an annual partner that produces a Tennessee Williams play to coincide with the dates of the Festival. The 2016 partner play was *Orpheus Descending*, shown at the Nims Theater at the University of New Orleans, while the 2015 production was *Suddenly Last Summer* at the Ashe Powerhouse Theater. Other theater partners include the NOLA Project and Le Petit Theatre. Individual performers also present plays throughout the weekend.

In addition to the regularly scheduled literary and theater events, each Festival features several beloved special events. The annual Tribute Reading brings some of the most notable Festival participants together in an event that celebrates a particular aspect of Williams' work. The Saturday morning Breakfast Book Club, held at Muriel's Restaurant, is a wildly popular event where a group gathers to discuss a specific work. The 2016 Breakfast Book Club focused on the controversial *Go Set A Watchman* by Harper Lee. The Writing Marathon takes place throughout the weekend, bringing together writers who use New Orleans as their inspiration in a loose workshop format. Food and drink events are held at local restaurants, including Bourbon House and Tujague's. The Festival wraps up with a final special event: the Stanley and Stella

Shouting Contest, held in Jackson Square on Sunday afternoon. Contestants sign up to do their best impression of Stanley from *A Streetcar Named Desire*, shouting “Stella!” (or “Stanley!” if they so choose) up to a crowd of judges gathered on a balcony. The event draws a huge crowd of both dedicated supporters and people who happen to be passing by. The Shouting Contest closes out the weekend of events.⁹

Saints and Sinners Literary Festival

The Saints and Sinners Literary Festival officially merged with the TW/NOLF in 2015, though it has been in existence since 2003. The Saints and Sinners Festival, or SAS, is an LGBT-centric literary festival that happens in conjunction with the TW/NOLF, though it is a smaller-scale event. SAS Fest features a similar array of panels, reading, talks, and events, all of them centered on the writers, publishers, and readers of the national LGBT community. With the recent merger, reciprocal ticketing options have allowed patrons of both festivals to check out events happening at the other, thus expanding their literary horizons even further.¹⁰

The Writing Contests

Each year in the fall leading up to the Festival, the TW/NOLF runs a trio of writing contests for up-and-coming authors on an international scale. Three separate contests are held: a one-act play contest, a fiction writing contest, and a poetry contest. Submissions cannot have been previously published, as the targets for these contest are new authors who are seeking exposure. The fee for participants is \$25 per contest submission. The contests are rounded down to ten finalists, who each receive a Festival Panel Pass. The three overall winners each receive a \$1500 award, VIP access passes to

⁹ For a full calendar of 2016 Festival events, see Appendix B.

¹⁰ *Saints and Sinners Festival*. Saints and Sinners Festival, n.d. Web. 25 June 2016.

the Festival, publication in one of three local literary magazines, and a staged reading at that year's Festival. The contest fees provide an important source of revenue for the Festival, and the contests themselves expand the Festival's reach across the country and beyond while fulfilling the goal of nurturing new literary talent.¹¹

writeNOW Educational Outreach Program

The writeNOW educational outreach program takes place on an annual basis during one day of the festival. Local high school students participate in a day of workshops led by notable Festival presenters. The Festival sometimes donates books to the students and high schools who participate in the program. Additionally, all participating students receive free passes to attend the Festival itself. While writeNOW is still a relatively small component of the TW/NOLF, only spanning one day, the Festival is hoping to expand the reach of the program.¹²

Coffee and Conversation

Throughout the fall leading up to each Festival, the TW/NOLF partners with the Jefferson Parish Public Library to produce a series of talks and discussions with notable writers and cultural figures. These talks often include book signings and Q&A sessions with participating authors. Coffee and Conversation is also a small-scale program, occurring about once a week for about two months during each fall season.¹³

¹¹ "Writing Contests." *Tennessee Williams Festival*. Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, n.d. Web. 25 June 2016.

¹² "Other Programs." *Tennessee Williams Festival*. Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, n.d. Web. 25 June 2016.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Internship Description

I began my search for an appropriate internship in the spring of 2015, when I was in the midst of my coursework for the Arts Administration program. I knew that I needed to find an organization where I could work over the course of the whole 2015-2016 year in order to complete my 480 hours, as I had work responsibilities that could not let me commit to a condensed internship of 480 hours of full-time work. I also wanted to join an organization that took a multidisciplinary approach to the arts, and one that would allow me to experience work across multiple departments.

After looking into several organizations, I reached out to the Tennessee Williams Festival on the advice of our department head. In May 2015, I met with J.R. Ramakrishnan, the Director of Literary Programs, for an interview and informational session regarding the internship. That week I also spoke to Brook Swire, who served as the Director of Communications at the time, on the phone. After this, I was offered the internship and began to fill out the necessary paperwork to start at the end of the summer.

I began my internship on August 24, 2015, coinciding with the start of the fall semester. In the time between my interview and the start of my internship, Brook had left her position and Tracy Cunningham had come into the role of Director of Communications. Additionally, Drew Jordan, the graduate assistant from the Creative Writing Workshop at the University of New Orleans, was also starting out at the same time. Thus, the first few weeks of my internship were a learning curve for the organization and the staff members as we began to adjust to our new roles and expectations.

My first task at my internship was updating the Board Book, or the official manual for the board of directors, for the 2015-2016 year. Much of the information, including contact info and bios, was outdated from previous years, and so I ensured everything was correct and reached out to new and current board members for updates on their contact information. This project helped me familiarize myself with both the rules of the organization and the staff and board members involved with TW/NOLF.¹⁴

After this, we began to prepare for the fall membership campaign. The membership program for TW/NOLF is called “Friends of Tennessee” and features nine membership levels, ranging from “Bibliophile,” which starts at \$25, to “Producing Partner,” which goes to \$10,000 and up. The membership levels provide an array of various perks tailored to each level, including VIP passes, discount codes, free concessions, patron party invitations, and name recognition in the program.¹⁵ For the 30th anniversary, TW/NOLF also ran a “30 for the 30th” campaign that invited donors to give \$30, \$300, or \$1000 and to be recognized in the program. The fact that 2016 was the 30th anniversary of the TW/NOLF made this membership campaign particularly important and notable.

I began by updating the copy in the previous year’s membership campaign letter (will attach) to reflect the importance of the 30th anniversary and the minor updates made to the membership levels. After this, Tracy, Drew, and I worked on cleaning up the Festival’s Vendini database. Vendini is the patron management and ticket sales database used by the Festival. Over the years, many duplicate, incomplete, and conflicting entries had appeared in the system, and we took several work days to go through the entire

¹⁴ “2015-2016 Board Book.”

¹⁵ “Member Benefits.” Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, n.d. Web. 15 May 2016.

database in order to clean this up. This was an important preliminary step for the membership campaign, as it would help curb the amount of returned envelopes and duplicate letters sent to the same person. It would also start us off with a clean and organized database in preparation for the 2016 Festival.

After these preparatory steps had been taken, we took two full days to work on stuffing and addressing the envelopes for the mailing. For this big task, we brought several volunteers in to help. Once the letters had all gone out, we began the ongoing project of processing memberships that started to come in. Our letters gave the option of mailing back a form with a check, joining online, or calling the office to sign up. As many of the TW/NOLF patrons are older, we had many mailed checks and phone calls to process. Tracy developed a system to track and process all incoming memberships, including updating the Vendini records, sending a thank-you letter, and adding the individual's name to our website. Drew and I were also trained in this process, and it was an ongoing task for the rest of the year leading up to the Festival. Additionally, I was responsible for handling the returned envelopes that did come in. I marked those addresses as unreachable in our database, and did my best to contact the individual patrons to get an updated mailing address.

At this point in my internship, I began to work on e-newsletters for TW/NOLF. The Festival sends at least one or two e-newsletters a week to its mailing list of about 10,000, with more newsletters going out when there are special announcements or events going on. The newsletters are composed in WordPress, which the Festival uses as its website platform, and then sent out to the mailing list via Constant Contact. In addition to the actual copy, the MailPoet feature in WordPress is used to embed images and arrange the layout and graphics. There are several steps that must be taken to

convert the WordPress post into an email-ready format, and Tracy sat with me through the process several times until I felt comfortable with it.

Initially, my contribution to the e-newsletters was a new feature called “Sponsor Spotlight.” We chose notable Festival sponsors and I wrote up blurbs about each of them, including background, mission, and their relationship to the Festival. Some of these included the New Orleans Theater Association, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, and Pelican Publishing. In addition to the “Sponsor Spotlight,” I also included a “Board Spotlight” section in these newsletters, where I highlighted two or three of our board members at a time. I sent brief interview questions to all of them and wrote up short bios to publish alongside these Q&As. Our hope with these new features was to make our sponsors and board members feel appreciated while keeping our patrons engaged with our major supporters. We continued this feature throughout my time at the Festival.¹⁶

While my initial involvement in marketing and the e-newsletters was meant to be limited to these Sponsor Spotlights, as time went on I increasingly became the point person for all e-newsletters.¹⁷ By January, I was either in charge of or had a hand in creating almost all of the e-news that went out. This can be attributed to the fact that with such a small staff, Tracy, Drew, and I were the only ones actually trained in producing the e-newsletters from start to finish. Additionally, I came into the internship with prior experience in WordPress, Constant Contact, and graphic design, which made the learning process easier for me than for Drew, whose major focus was the writing contests. As Tracy had a variety of other tasks that were often more pressing, J.R. and

¹⁶ See Appendix C for an example of a “Sponsor Spotlight” e-newsletter.

¹⁷ See Appendix D for an example of a typical marketing e-newsletter.

Paul began to simply send me copy or ideas they wanted to highlight, and I would craft the e-newsletters themselves. While I am not generally interested in marketing and found this responsibility tedious at times, it was certainly a necessary component of working in such a small office where teamwork was crucial and everyone needed to emphasize and expand on their individual strengths.

In October, after the membership campaign went out and our marketing and e-newsletter schedule for the upcoming months was prepared, we began to prep for the annual Member Preview Party. This took place on Thursday, November 3, 2016. This annual event brings together board members, Festival authors and speakers, and high-level donors in a party at the home of Susie Hoskins, one of the board members, who also donates food and drink to the event. This event serves as a halfway point between festivals and allows the TW/NOLF community to gather and get excited for the upcoming year's Festival. In preparation for this event, we worked on mailing out invitations, preparing nametags and lanyards, and putting together an RSVP list. I also worked the evening of the actual event, where I served as the event photographer, taking shots of the party and the individual attendees that we later shared on our Facebook page and in our e-newsletters.

The next major project came later in November, just before the Thanksgiving holiday. This was a brand-new fall fundraiser that took the form of an online auction. In preparation for the 2016 Festival, the fall of 2015 was the first time this event was held for TW/NOLF. We partnered with 501 Auctions, a New-Orleans based online auction facilitator, who came to us recommended by Sara Woodard, one of our board members. The auction itself lasted for about three weeks from late November to December, just before Christmas. The auction was open to all, and people from around the country were

able to bid on items including VIP festival passes, sets of books, original artworks, hotel packages, gift cards, jewelry, and numerous other items that centered on New Orleans as a theme. In the weeks leading up to the Festival, Tracy and I were busy soliciting donations from local organizations and companies for the auction, and encouraging board members to either donate items or solicit donations themselves. Once a donor had pledged to donate something, either Tracy or I needed to fill out the appropriate paperwork, pick up the item and bring it back to the office, and update the auction website. On an ongoing basis, I also drafted e-newsletters promoting the auction and highlighting certain items. Once the auction came to a close, we had to reach out to auction winners to ensure they would either pick up or get their items mailed to them.

The auction was the last major task of 2015 before we went on winter break. I was away from the office for about two weeks, and came back in January 2016 ready to start preparing for the Festival itself. In addition to my ongoing responsibilities related to marketing and memberships, most of my new duties between January and the start of the Festival in March were related to Festival prep. I began helping proofread the 2016 Festival program, a 40-page magazine-style spread that explains each and every Festival event in detail, includes a calendar and map of events, highlights all donors and sponsors, and provides valuable advertising space. The Festival contracts with an outside printing company to produce this document. While the print version itself is usually not ready until March, the initial PDF version goes on the website much earlier. Everyone in the office proofread the program several times with a fine-tooth comb, and we all did the same for the print version in March.

In addition to working on the program, I helped with a variety of logistical tasks including securing equipment rentals and getting materials ready and printed for

individual events. I printed and proofread table tents for each individual panel, master class, and event; ensured that event speaker rosters were complete and finalized; and sent all venues a list of each event happening at their space to ensure that they knew what to publicize. I worked with Tracy on proofreading and organizing the individual event tickets for the box office before those were sent to our printer, and once those were complete, assisted with mailing the appropriate tickets to our sponsors and high-level patrons. While we contracted out the printing of name tags for the event with an outside company, I was responsible for creating and proofreading our master Excel list of names, titles, and affiliations that went to the company. Right before the Festival started, I worked on printing and organizing will call lists for the box office and for each individual venue. Throughout this time period, I also sent frequent e-newsletters and reminders through Vendini for our patrons to purchase tickets and reserve their spots ahead of time.

During the actual Festival, beginning on Thursday, March 30, I was in charge of the box office at the Hotel Monteleone, our Festival Headquarters. The box office was open from 9am to 5pm throughout the Festival, and I arrived at 8am to help set up and left at around 6pm once everything was broken down and prepped for the next day. At the box office, patrons were able to come and purchase tickets on the spot, or pick up passes or tickets that they had already purchased online. The box office was also the location for all sponsors, VIP All-Access patrons, and high-level members to pick up their credentials. We had several volunteers from Iberia Bank working at the box office with us throughout the weekend. My primary task was retrieving credentials for sponsors and patrons and answering their questions, though I also jumped in to sell tickets as needed. I spent the majority of the weekend at the box office, except for the

very last day, where I left a little bit early to help Tracy organize the Stella Shouting Contest in Jackson Square.

After the Festival weekend, I spent two more weeks at the TW/NOLF office, helping to wrap up loose ends and closing out my internship responsibilities. I helped draft several event reports for sponsors and assisted with copy for a couple of grant applications. I also sorted through the Dropbox where Festival photographers had been placing their images all weekends, picking out select shots to use for grants, proposals, and in our general e-newsletters. I used these to create several graphics of photos from the 2016 Festival to use in promotional material.¹⁸ Finally, I sat down with Tracy for a wrap-up meeting about the internship, where we honed my internship description and discussed the role any future interns might play in the organization.

¹⁸ See Appendix E for an example of a promotional collage.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

Figure 3: S.W.O.T. Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated supporters and participants • Merger with Saints and Sinners Festival • 30-year longevity as an organization • Network within the New Orleans community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging patron base • Complicated ticketing options for Festival events • Inconsistent support from board of directors • Internal miscommunication and tension
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptick in support for education-based programs • Partnerships with organizations that target a younger audience • Increased interest in festivals on a national scale • Stabilization of staffing model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louisiana budget crisis • Addition of non-profit sales tax • Constant expansion of festival market in New Orleans

Strengths

Dedicated supporters and participants

Many of the Festival's attendees have been participating in the event since its inception in 1986, and have gone to each and every one of the 30 festivals. For many of these people, the Festival is an annual reunion of a community of friends. Some simply come to listen, while others have developed their writing careers as presenters and speakers at the TW/NOLF. Patrons like these are likely to continue attending the Festival regardless of most outside factors, and can be counted on as a reliable supporter base. These patrons also have a high tendency to rave about the Festival to their friends and families, thus bringing in potential new visitors from across the country.

Merger with Saints and Sinners Festival

Events that have been happening in a consistent, similar manner over a long period of time can easily become stagnant and repetitive. It is important to continuously bring fresh and new ideas to the table, and TW/NOLF was successful in doing this through their merger with the Saints and Sinners Festival. The reciprocal ticketing options and easier logistics of bringing the two festivals together ensure that patrons from both events can expand their horizons and check out new ideas. Patrons of the Saints and Sinners Festival can check out panels on the history and culture of New Orleans, while patrons of the Tennessee Williams Festival can listen to discussions on trends in the LGBT writing community. All of this expands the Festival's community and ensures further longevity.

30-year longevity as an organization

The fact that the TW/NOLF has been a part of the New Orleans nonprofit community for over 30 years is an excellent sign of its stability and reputation in the area. New

Orleans can seem oversaturated with nonprofit organizations, especially those targeting the arts and education, notably so since Hurricane Katrina.¹⁹ With 30 years of service to its name, the TW/NOLF is able to make a good impression on existing and potential new funders. Funders are able to see the stability of the Festival and feel comfortable that their money will be used properly, which might not be the case for a brand-new organization with no existing reputation.

Network within the New Orleans community

Due to its 30-year existence and its commitment to partnering with other local organizations, the TW/NOLF has succeeded in building a large network in the New Orleans community. The Festival has some kind of relationship with just about every literary- and theater-focused organization in New Orleans. Some of these are working relationships and longstanding partnerships, such as those with Southern Rep and Le Petit Theatre, while others are personal relationships made through the staff and board members. This thorough familiarity with the major players of the New Orleans nonprofit and arts world ensures that the Festival does not run out of ideas or inspiration for new collaborations or partnerships. It also ensures that it is relatively easy for the Festival to find speakers, performers, and venues for any last-minute cancellations or plan changes, which eliminates a source of stress that might be notable for a less established nonprofit.

¹⁹ McKeever, Brice and Hunter H. Pollak. "Ten years after Katrina, New Orleans non-profits are still growing." *Urban Wire*. Urban Institute, 21 Aug. 2015. Web. 15 June 2016.

Weaknesses

Aging patron base

Hand-in-hand with the strength and commitment of the TW/NOLF patron base comes the fact that these patrons tend to be on the older side. The nature of the Festival, with days of literary discussions and theater events, can also be off-putting to the general younger audience. While the current Festival community is strong, it is imperative for the Festival to bring younger patrons in to ensure sustainability and further longevity. At a certain point, the older patrons who travel from around the country to attend the event will no longer be able to do so, and there needs to be a consistent incoming flow of young people making up for this. Otherwise, the TW/NOLF is likely to see a consistent decrease in both ticket sales and attendance.

Complicated ticketing options for Festival events

As the Festival has grown over the years, the ticketing and event options have expanded considerably. There are usually at least three or four unique events happening simultaneously at different venues. The ticketing options for all these events are extremely complicated and unwieldy: for example, to get into a single discussion panel, a patron can choose to buy a single panel pass, a day panel pass, a weekend panel pass, a full master class series, or an all-access pass, and some panels have additional special ticket options. Some of these are available online through Vendini in advance while some must be purchased at the door. There was considerable confusion at the box office throughout the weekend with people being unsure about what their credentials allowed, with some becoming disgruntled when they realized they had essentially double-paid. This process needs to be reorganized and streamlined. Otherwise, the Festival will lose out on confused and frustrated patrons who cannot figure out the system, and receive

complaints and negative feedback at the Festival and through post-event evaluations. A positive, smooth ticket-buying experience could be key for patron retention.

Inconsistent support from the board of directors

For a nonprofit of a relatively small scale, the TW/NOLF has a very large board of directors, numbering 27. There is notable inconsistency among the board members in terms of their participation. Some are ready and willing to jump in and help plan events, solicit donations, and head meetings; others are less active but might still make a large in-kind donation or contribution each year; and others are completely out of the picture, do not attend meetings, and do not respond to emails. Some factors contributing to this are the fact that in spite of the three-year term outlined in the bylaws, board members are able to renew that term indefinitely, and the fact that there are no mandatory contributions or expectations outlined in the bylaws at this time. Festival staff spend significant time attempting to contact unresponsive board members, soliciting contributions or support that is not forthcoming. For the Festival's new fall online auction, the staff consistently asked board members to either donate auction items or reach out to contacts in the community who could do so, but many simply made no effort. The unresponsive section of the board weighs down the board members who are eager to participate and creates a difficult situation for staff.

Internal miscommunication and tension

As the TW/NOLF operates with a full-time staff of just three, it is natural that the duties and tasks of all staff members constantly overlap and that all hands must be on deck at all times. Due partially to the fact that Tracy's position, the Director of Communications, has seen almost yearly turnover, there is a degree of tension and miscommunication in the office caused by conflicting work styles. There are no distinct

outlines or expectations for weekly meetings, scheduled work time for projects, or check-ins among staff. Thus, it was common to see tasks fall through the cracks and for the staff to be unclear what their individual responsibilities were on a given task. There was also a frequent flow of interruptions, both to individual work and during meetings, which made simple tasks take far longer than necessary. This miscommunication decreases efficiency and creates an unproductive office culture.

Opportunities

Uptick in support for education-based programs

A common trend across the country, and especially in Louisiana, has been an increased interest in funding K-12 education-based programming. Many grants and funders have clauses stipulating that some or all of the funding must go toward educational programming. For nonprofits that are unsuited to incorporating education into mission-aligned programming, this can be a serious impediment. Fortunately, TW/NOLF has been on the right track with its creation of the writeNOW educational outreach program. While this program is still relatively quite small, it presents an excellent growth opportunity that aligns with what funders are looking for. The writeNOW program could thus open up additional funding opportunities and sources of revenue for the TW/NOLF.

Partnerships with organizations that target a younger audience

Though the TW/NOLF struggles with an aging patron base and difficulty attracting younger donors, there are many opportunities in New Orleans to partner with creative organizations that do attract a younger crowd. The Festival has moved toward

this with its NOLA Project collaborations and select events on St. Claude Avenue, but there is ample room to push this even further. Growing these partnerships is mutually beneficial, as they would bring a younger crowd to the TW/NOLF while lending the reputation and stability of TW/NOLF to younger, less established organizations. Both sides would be able to grow their patron bases and expand their reach.

Increased interest in festivals on a national scale

While New Orleans has a long history of festival-based culture and entertainment, the popularity of festivals across the country has been growing at an exponential rate.²⁰ Though most current statistics focus on music events, the attractiveness of festivals has certainly spread to all genres. It seems that every weekend during the warm months, there are multiple large-scale music festivals occurring in diverse locations. On a smaller, more local scale, most cities and towns in the country have begun to add festivals celebrating neighborhoods, food, music, and local culture to their yearly calendars. This growth is a great opportunity for the TW/NOLF to market itself as an established destination festival that blends the culture, music, food, and art that people are increasingly interested in seeing. This reputation could lead to an increase in attendance and ticket sales for the TW/NOLF and establish a nationwide patron base for the festival.

Stabilization of staffing model

The role of the Director of Communications has fluctuated wildly in the past few years, with several individuals with distinctly different strengths and work styles in the position. Also, there have not been particular expectations or roles assigned to the

²⁰ Reddy, Trips. "6 Factors Driving the Massive Growth of Music Festivals." *Umbel*. Umbel Corp, 7 Oct. 2015. Web. 15 June 2016.

interns that have come in both through the Arts Administration program and other sources. Fortunately, at this point, Tracy, the current Director of Communications, is staying on for her second year and plans to remain with TW/NOLF. She also intends to create a more linear internship experience with a clear description. These factors, though small, could contribute significantly to a more organized office environment, as simply having a full roster of staff who have worked through multiple Festivals is an invaluable benefit.

Threats

Louisiana budget crisis

A common problem for nonprofits in New Orleans and Louisiana as a whole is the ongoing state budget crisis. After former governor Bobby Jindal left office, leaving the state with a massive deficit, the new administration has been struggling to plug the holes and get the state's finances back on track. Most nonprofit organizations are affected: even if it does not rely directly on large amounts of state support, it is likely that the foundations and institutions that write its grants do depend on state support. Individuals affected by the budget crisis will also tend to write fewer checks and give less financial support. This difficult fiscal environment leads to a decrease in available funding alongside an increase in competitions for the grants and donors that do remain. Until Louisiana is able to get its finances back into a stable position, this will be an ongoing problem for the TW/NOLF and similar organizations.

Addition of nonprofit sales tax

Related to the ongoing attempts to find a solution to the current state budget crisis is the new nonprofit sales tax, implemented on April 1, 2016. Nonprofits, which were formerly exempt from sales tax on the tickets, concessions, and other items they sold, are now required to pay a tax of 5 percent. After June 30, 2016, this number is supposed to drop to 3 percent, and phase out again after two years.²¹ This measure affected the 2016 Festival directly, as it occurred in the middle of the weekend's programming, leading to issues with ticketing software, disgruntled patrons, and a learning curve in staff and volunteer training. Beyond these immediate effects, this tax could have far-reaching implications for the TW/NOLF, which depends on ticket sales for a significant portion of its income.

Constant expansion of festival market in New Orleans

While the country overall has seen an increased interest in festival-based events, in New Orleans the festival market is quickly becoming oversaturated. On any given weekend throughout the year, at least two or three festivals are likely to be occurring at the same time. During the "festival season," this number can often go up to five or six.²² With such an extreme amount of events to choose from, the festival-going audience of New Orleans cannot possibly attend them all. This increased competition naturally leads to potential decreases in attendance numbers for the TW/NOLF. With other, often similar, events happening at the same time, both in New Orleans and on a larger scale, the TW/NOLF must work harder to attract and retain a large audience.

²¹ "Revenue Information Bulletin No. 16-014. Sales Tax." *Louisiana Department of Revenue*. Louisiana Department of Revenues, 30 March 2016. Web. 16 May 2016.

²² "2016 New Orleans Festivals." *New Orleans Online*. New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, 2016. Web. 25 June 2016.

Best Practices

Throughout my time in the Arts Administration graduate program at UNO and my time at the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, I had ample opportunities to learn about best practices for non-profit arts organizations. I also did research on strategies for festival management, a relevant subfield to my internship at the TW/NOLF. In this section, I will explore several specific fields in festival and non-profit management: audience expansion and engagement; ticketing and patron management technology; the board of directors; and office culture and human resources. I will apply best practices from these fields to the TW/NOLF and explain how the Festival might benefit from implementing some of these strategies. I will also explore several arts organizations that are similar to the Festival and draw comparisons between their approaches to these best practices.

Audience Expansion and Engagement

A primary concern for the TW/NOLF, as outlined in the SWOT analysis above, is an aging patron base and lack of youth and diversity in Festival attendees. Of course, expanding the audience of an established and entrenched nonprofit is not a simple task. In “The Road to Results: Effective Practices For Building Arts Audiences,” published by The Wallace Foundation, author Bob Harlow outlines nine specific steps that arts organizations can take to successfully expand their audience. These steps are: 1. Recognizing When Change Is Needed; 2. Identifying the Target Audience that Fits; 3. Determining What Kinds of Barriers Need to Be Removed; 4. Audience Research to Clarify the Approach; 5. Thinking Through the Relationship; 6. Providing Multiple Ways

In; 7. Aligning the Organization Around the Strategy; 8. Building in Learning; and 9. Preparing for Success.²³ Applied to the TW/NOLF, these steps could provide a valuable strategy for expanding the younger patron base and audience of the Festival. This would ensure further stability and longevity for the organization.

The TW/NOLF has achieved the first two steps of the nine-step process: the organization knows that audience expansion is necessary, and it is clear that the younger demographic is the target group. The next step for the Festival is to outline a more specific goal for audience expansion and to determine the best approach to attracting this group. The Wallace Foundation split potential audiences into three groups: the “disinclined,” who are “likely to keep their distance from arts organizations because of perpetual barriers”; the “inclined,” who “see value in an art form but aren’t currently [participating]”; and the “current audience,” who could potentially deepen their involvement.²⁴ Each of these three groups requires a distinct approach. I feel that the TW/NOLF could benefit most from pursuing the “inclined” group, or young individuals who already feel an affinity toward the arts, and their “current audience,” or young individuals who have already attended events but may not be participating to their fullest potential. Pursuing the “disinclined” group would require resources and manpower beyond the TW/NOLF’s current capacity.

The NOLA Project, a theater company based in New Orleans that regularly partners with the TW/NOLF, has been successful in engaging audiences outside of the theater mainstream. They have recently rolled out a crisp, colorful new website that speaks to current trends in media and website design. Their social media connections—

²³ Harlow, Bob. “The Road to Results: Effective Practices for Building Arts Audiences.” *The Wallace Foundation*. Bob Harlow Research and Consulting LLC, 2014. Web. 3 May 2016. ix-xi.

²⁴ Ibid. 20.

potentially the best way to reach a younger audience—already outstrip those of the TW/NOLF, though The NOLA Project has only existed since 2005. The NOLA Project boasts 6,752 Facebook likes, almost a thousand more than TW/NOLF’s 5,786.²⁵ In addition to social media savvy, The NOLA Project’s success in connecting with the young people who are so elusive to theater companies comes from their investment in innovative and unconventional strategies. They regularly present plays in atypical locations, such as the Sculpture Garden at the New Orleans Museum of Art or the lakeshore of New Orleans. In fact, their contributions to the TW/NOLF tend to be quirky improv and comedy shows, which tend to draw a unique crowd when compared to the rest of the event.²⁶ The NOLA Project presents an excellent example of a local partner working in a similar artistic medium that has succeeded in employing strategies to draw a diverse local crowd.

Ticketing and Database Technology

While strategies around ticketing and effective sales might not apply to every nonprofit, this area is a key focus for the TW/NOLF. Most nonprofits utilize at least some kind of patron management database, but for many of these organizations, this software is primarily used to track charitable contributions and single donations. In contrast, the individuals who support the TW/NOLF do so primarily through direct ticket sales and membership options, both of which tie into the sales umbrella.

Referencing the 2015-2016 revenue chart, 24% of the Festival’s projected revenue comes from ticket sales, 21% comes from the membership campaign, and only 2% comes from

²⁵ “Connect.” *The NOLA Project*. The NOLA Project, 2016. Web. 23 June 2016.

²⁶ “Shows.” *The NOLA Project*. The NOLA Project, 2016. Web. 23 June 2016.

direct donations.²⁷ This is a unique way for a nonprofit to interact with its patrons, and the software and technology used to leverage this information becomes increasingly important. Two key factors emerge: the internal software used by TW/NOLF must be sufficiently robust to both capture detailed patron information and provide efficient ticket sales, and the outward facing ticket interface must be clear and simple to use, creating a positive experience for the buyer.

While the current Vendini application used by the TW/NOLF both captures patron information and sells tickets, it is often counterintuitive and makes report pulling, data analysis, and outreach campaigns difficult. On the outward-facing side, the Festival simply offers entirely too many conflicting and confusing ticket options to serve as an easy interface for buyers. The Marcato Festival website suggests “connect[ing] to a good network of festival professionals,” talking to friends and employees at similar organizations, and doing extensive research to compare a variety of options before making any festival software decisions.²⁸ Connecting with other festivals of similar scope and scale across the city and nation would be key for the TW/NOLF, as it could create excellent dialogue about technology and other best practices with true industry professionals.

The New Orleans Film Festival (NOFF) is a local New Orleans festival with a similar scope: it has existed for 27 years and takes place over the course of eight days.²⁹ The NOFF, which features several hundred films happening over a relatively small timespan, has a comparatively simple ticketing page. There is a breakdown of several single-

²⁷ See Figure 2 in this report.

²⁸ Fenton, Ethan. “A Guide to Selecting and Managing Your Festival’s Technology Providers.” *Marcato Festival*. Marcato Online Group, 1 Feb. 2016. Web. 31 May 2016

²⁹ “About.” *New Orleans Film Festival*. New Orleans Film Society, n.d. Web. 23 June 2016.

and multi-ticket pass options, including prices for members and non-members, and a handy FAQ that answers many questions similar to those asked by TW/NOLF attendees.³⁰ Clicking one of the ticket options links to the NOFF's ticketing system, run by Agile Ticketing Solutions. While this page is still not ideal in terms of clarity and visual simplicity, it is much cleaner and easier to navigate than the Vendini system. The patron also has an increased amount of options in terms of searching by title, date, or schedule. I was unable to test out the ease of the cart and check-out process, as no tickets are currently on sale, but the first impression made by the system and the available FAQ suggests a manageable, fairly clear system.

A report by the Chamber of Arts and Culture of Western Australia, titled "Ticketing and CRM Systems for Cultural Activities," provides an overview of trends in both internal and external-facing ticket sales.³¹ In terms of external-facing ticketing options, the report highlights ongoing trends toward mobile and computer-based ticketing rather than paper printouts or physical tickets. The Australian report summarizes that "the benefits of digital ticketing have had an impact on buyers' preferences: arts and culture events need to be easy to find; purchases need to be convenient, practical, simple and secure".³² The TW/NOLF, which combines an older patron base who often prefer direct interaction with a hope to attract a younger audience, must continue to provide the excellent customer service it currently practices while looking toward trends in technology. Thus, a two-pronged approach that explores potential new user-focused ticketing software and simplifies the current Festival event

³⁰ "Tickets." *New Orleans Film Festival*. New Orleans Film Society, n.d. Web. 23 June 2016.

³¹ "Ticketing and CRM Systems for Cultural Activities Report." *The Chamber for Arts and Culture Western Australia*. CACWA, 2014. Web. 31 May 2016.

³² Ibid. 45.

options is key to making patrons happy. Increased simplicity would also save the Festival staff hours of valuable time that is currently spent on constantly explaining ticket options and providing impromptu tech support for buyers.

Board of Directors and Governance

Switching from external to internal-focused best practices, a key area that requires strategic thinking from the TW/NOLF is the Festival's board of directors and governance system. The Festival's current board of 27, some of whom have been with the Festival since the beginning, and some of whom have attended almost zero meetings, is a difficult entity that has often created more work than efficiency for the TW/NOLF's staff. The Council of Nonprofits cautions "against boards larger than 13-17, because it's so hard to keep all those board members engaged".³³ With a board double this size, this rings true for the TW/NOLF. I had the opportunity to sit in on a board meeting, and while most of the attendees were excited and motivated to talk about the festival, only ten if not fewer of the board members were actually in attendance. There are no limits on how long board members can renew their terms, and there are no official financial or in-kind contribution outlined in the Board Handbook.

In comparing the TW/NOLF's current board of directors to the guidelines suggested by the Council of Nonprofits, I chose to do a quantitative overview of several nonprofit boards across New Orleans. The New Orleans Museum of Art, one of the oldest and most established arts organizations in the city, has 42 board members.³⁴

³³ "Finding the Right Board Members for your Nonprofit." *National Council of Nonprofits*. National Council of Nonprofits, n.d. Web. 31 May 2016.

³⁴ "NOMA Board of Trustees." *New Orleans Museum of Art*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 June 2016.

Next, the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, the nonprofit arm of the gargantuan local staple Jazz Fest, has 31 members on their board.³⁵ The New Orleans Food and Wine Experience, a smaller event similar in scale to the TW/NOLF, has 19 board members.³⁶ The New Orleans Film Society, responsible for the New Orleans Film Festival mentioned above, has 16 board members.³⁷ Finally, Southern Rep Theatre, a long-time theater partner of the TW/NOLF, has 16 board members as well.³⁸ These numbers do not include advisory board members or other affiliates, only the executive committee and the regular board. The numbers alone suggest that the TW/NOLF's board of 27 is far too large for a nonprofit of its scope, and that overhauling this number will assist in easier operations and day-to-day management for such a comparatively small organization.

The National Council of Nonprofits provides guidelines for all aspects of boards and board governance. A report from this organization titled "How to Be a Great Board Member" breaks board members down into four categories, ranging from "Weak," to "OK," to "Good," and finally to "Great".³⁹ For a struggling board, it is important for board members and staff to have time for reflective, self-aware conversations about their placement in these categories and their strengths and weaknesses as board members. The Council of Nonprofits provides resources and suggestions for the education and training of board members.⁴⁰ These include providing board members

³⁵ "About Us." *The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation*. The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and Foundation, 2016. Web. 23 June 2016.

³⁶ "Leadership." *New Orleans Food and Wine Experience*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 June 2016.

³⁷ "Board of Directors." *New Orleans Film Society*. New Orleans Film Society, 2016. Web. 23 June 2016.

³⁸ "Our Board." *Southern Rep Theatre*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 June 2016.

³⁹ "How to Be a Great Nonprofit Board Member." *National Council of Nonprofits*. National Council of Nonprofits, 22 Sep. 2009. Web. 31 May 2016.

⁴⁰ "Board Roles and Responsibilities." *National Council of Nonprofits*. National Council of Nonprofits, n.d. Web. 31 May 2016.

with job descriptions, setting up orientations for new board members, and creating clear contracts and agendas that outline board responsibilities. While board members are, of course, volunteers, they will feel more connection and dedication to their nonprofit when they are held to clear and transparent standards.

While a consistent, stable board of directors is key for a successful nonprofit, there are certainly situations where new board members will be needed to replace members who are leaving and to bring a new set of experiences to the group. The Council of Nonprofits suggests beginning with an “assessment of the skills, experience, and expertise of your existing board so you can identify gaps”.⁴¹ One common thread throughout the majority of classes I took in the Arts Administration program was the importance of a diverse board of directors. Diversity must span a range of factors from age to gender to ethnicity to occupation. The current TW/NOLF skews older, and the majority are white. Most work in academia or literature- and theater-related professions. If the TW/NOLF hopes to successfully attract a younger, more diverse patron base, then an excited, motivated board of directors that reflects the diversity of potential patrons is a key factor in moving forward.

Improvement of Office Culture

The fourth key strategic area for the TW/NOLF to focus on would be the improvement of the office culture and office dynamics. Best practices in this area can be drawn from a wide-ranging and diverse array of sources, as employee happiness and satisfaction has a clear link to efficiency and productivity. The TW/NOLF operates with

⁴¹ “Finding the Right Board Members for your Nonprofit.”

just three full-time staff members in the office at any given time, with one or two graduate students in attendance depending on their individual schedules. As such, best practices that are tailored to very small organizations are key in providing suggestions for a more productive office environment. While some of these strategies are built for small businesses and for-profit organizations, they are easily transferable to a nonprofit office environment. The current weaknesses of the TW/NOLF office are a lack of scheduled check-ins and structured work time, and frequent interruptions, all culminating in regular miscommunication. Addressing these weak spots could propel the Festival to greater productivity, efficiency, and positivity.

A key practice in successful office management is the implementation of streamlined and clear communication channels. An inc.com article that outlines communication strategies for small companies suggests that organizations “establish regular processes... Make communication a weekly process with defined rules”.⁴² Successful offices have clear processes for scheduling and planning meetings, which decreases interruptions and increases productivity. While regular meetings within a small office might seem superfluous, it would actually be extremely valuable for all staff members to remain informed and aware of the projects and plans of their coworkers. Additionally, small offices lend themselves to easy interruptions and a constant flow of conversation. While the ease of locating and talking to coworkers in a small office can certainly be a great benefit, it is also important to create periods of dedicated, productive worktime.

⁴² Winfrey, Graham. “10 Ways to Build a Strong Team (Infographic). Inc. Inc, 14 Nov. 2014. Web. 31 May 2016.

Surveys have demonstrated that “a strong company culture engages employees, and engaged employees are 22% more profitable, plus 21% more productive than companies with disengaged employees, according to a Gallup poll. Businesses with engaged employees also have a lower turnover rate and higher employee morale”.⁴³ The TW/NOLF has had some issues with turnover, some inevitable, like the constant flow of interns and graduate assistants from UNO, and some quite disruptive, like the yearly change in the position of Director of Communications. With Tracy Cunningham taking over this role and staying for the foreseeable future, the TW/NOLF can move forward from simply worrying about hiring and training and focus on creating an office culture that is conducive to ensuring that all staff members feel valued and engaged in the work they are doing. An article from Great Places to Work states that “your culture is only as cohesive as the people willing to live out the shared values”.⁴⁴ Ensuring that all staff members are always on the same page about expectations and protocols and celebrating individual accomplishments and successful goal achievement creates a smooth and positive office environment. This environment, in turn, leads to a productive and happy team.

⁴³ Furgison, Lisa. “10 Tips for Creating a Productive Employee Culture in a Small Business.” *Fivestars*. Fivestars Loyalty, 2015. Web. 31 May 2016.

⁴⁴ “Top Ten People Practices from the 2012 Best Small & Medium Workplaces List.” *Great Place to Work*. Great Place to Work Institute, n.d. Web. 31 May 2016.

Recommendations

In this section, I will link my personal experience at the Festival with the S.W.O.T. Analysis and the Best Practices outlined earlier in the paper to provide direct, specific recommendations that the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival could implement to improve efficiency and productivity and to address its growth areas and weaknesses. As a small nonprofit, the TW/NOLF does not have the capacity or the resources to undertake any major overhauls or projects that diverge from its day-to-day mission. Thus, my suggestions are largely small-scale, intended to be feasible and attainable while still providing the TW/NOLF with ideas for beneficial change. My recommendations center around the same four areas explored in the Best Practices chapter: audience expansion, ticketing, the board of directors, and internal communication.

Audience Expansion

Arts organizations are in constant pursuit of larger audiences and additional patrons. This is especially true of organizations like the TW/NOLF, which depend on ticket sales and memberships for a large portion of their annual income. Of course, most nonprofits are not in a position to implement a huge audience expansion project over a short period of time. Thus, my recommendation for the TW/NOLF is for the Festival to simply make small strides towards creating a long-term plan to attract a younger, more diverse audience. Slow implementation will ensure that the Festival is not overtaxed beyond its resources and that the audience expansion project is carefully planned and not a last-minute effort. This would involve a thorough analysis of any current patrons

who fall into the target age group, information exchange with partner organizations with their own patron bases, and a plan for what exactly the younger participants would experience once they expressed further interest in the Festival. The TW/NOLF should start by conducting a two-part research project. The first part of this would involve an evaluation of the Festival's current attendees, or the "current audience" faction noted in the Best Practices chapter. The key step here for the TW/NOLF would be to conduct research regarding current and potential new audiences, and to create a plan to "[think] through how audiences would interact with [the] organization."⁴⁵

For the upcoming year, the Festival should begin collecting more specific information from patrons. This can happen both at the patron's first interaction, or point-of-sale, and at the end of any Festival events through an updated survey that is more thorough than the one currently given out at the Festival. In addition to responses that evaluate the actual events, these questionnaires should seek to capture demographic information about the age, gender, background, and occupation of the patron, as well as information about how they came to attend the Festival. While not all participants are comfortable answering these questions, the Festival will be able to gather some valuable data about the age ranges and profiles of current attendees. Once the groundwork for attracting this younger audience is laid, the TW/NOLF will be able to start planning for the second phase, which is actually crafting and implementing programming specifically targeted toward the new group.

The second part of this research project would involve the Festival's partners and similar organizations and festivals operating in New Orleans. This would be especially

⁴⁵ "The Road to Results: Effective Practices for Building Arts Audiences."

valuable for organizations who attract a younger, more diverse crowd. Current partners include Southern Rep, The NOLA Project, Le Petit Theatre, and other literary and theater groups. While asking for direct contact info for patrons from these organizations could be unethical, the Festival could certainly obtain a basic overview of the demographics of their participants to mirror the data collected on their own patrons. Once this research, even if it is informal, is conducted, the Festival will have a clear picture of the profiles of typical attendees of its own programs and other arts organizations. Using this information, the Festival will be able to determine which subsets of its own patron base could provide an opportunity for expansion. It will also be able to determine the profiles of individuals who attend arts events similar to the Festival. Armed with data on the realistic groups that might be responsive to new marketing and programming efforts, the Festival can take the next step in planning campaigns that will attract this particular audience.

Ticketing & Memberships

While moving away from the complicated and often unwieldy Vendini ticketing system could be a long-term goal for the Festival, adopting a brand-new system is likely not feasible in the short run. However, the TW/NOLF can certainly begin to take steps toward simplifying the options patrons are faced with when they seek to attend the Festival. The first step would be to conduct a so-called “audit” of the current ticket option. This should involve listing out all of the types of events offered by the Festival—master classes, panels, plays, musical performances, readings, food tastings, and so forth—while simultaneously listing each and every ticket option that could get a patron into a given type of event. This would likely reveal an extremely complicated web of

Panel Passes, All-Access Passes, Master Class Series, Single Event Tickets, and a myriad of other options. An additional idea could be listing out the current membership levels alongside the ticketing benefits each level offers. With all of this information represented visually at the same time, Festival staff will be able to look for ways to simplify the ticketing process and streamline membership options.

Options such as the Scholars Conference Pass, which could easily be absorbed into the Panel Pass option, and events such as the One-Act Play Reading, which is touted as a theater event but requires a regular panel ticket, offer ample opportunities for simplification. The different levels of Festival membership through the “Friends of Tennessee” program could receive a simultaneous audit. Many of these levels coincide with ticketing benefits and discounts which sometimes contradict one another and create loopholes for attending certain events.⁴⁶ Simplifying the ticketing hierarchy and the membership levels simultaneously will allow for a clearer and more seamless integration between the two. An overhaul of the ticketing and membership systems will make the process much easier for both frustrated patrons and overwhelmed staff members. Additionally, this overhaul could provide the Festival with a marketing and branding opportunity that might catch the eye of current and potential patrons who might feel that the current system is complicated and inaccessible.

In the long run, as Festival staff might begin to consider other software and programs for ticketing and patron management, a system overhaul could go hand-in-hand with audience expansion and increased appeal to younger attendees. A key research task in selecting the best software could include doing a thorough overview of

⁴⁶ “Member Benefits.”

every arts organization in New Orleans to determine which ticketing systems they all use. Locals who attend many different events throughout the year would find it easier and more efficient to use the same ticketing software across organizations, as this would allow for saved payment types and save them the hassle of logging on to dozens of different sites.

Board of Directors Overhaul

A revitalization of the current TW/NOLF board of directors is key in ensuring the continued longevity and positive reputation of the Festival. Additionally, if the Festival intends to undertake any audience engagement or event improvement campaigns, such as those suggested in this chapter, a motivated and engaged board will be an excellent resource and tool. With all of this in mind, the three-year term cycles outlined in the current board handbook of the Festival could be conducive to starting conversations with disengaged board members. As each cycle of three-year terms comes to a close, every board member wrapping up a cycle should have an honest and transparent meeting with the Festival staff. At these meetings, both the staff and the board member should discuss their expectations for the role, their interest in and reasons for continuing to serve on the board, and a list of goals and proposals for the upcoming year or cycle. Another idea for the TW/NOLF could be a mandatory board “retreat” that happens once or twice a year and includes team-building, goal-setting, and role-clarifying activities for both current and new board members.

Through these open conversations, board members will be able to take ownership of their own roles and will have clear goals for the upcoming year. This should assist in increased engagement and involvement on the part of the board

members. In turn, the staff members conducting the meetings will have a clearer understanding of the expectations and ideas of each member of the board. Throughout these cycles, there will certainly be board members who decide to leave their positions on their own. Others, who are not performing their duties and not aligned with the goals of the Festival's board, might require more difficult conversations where they are asked to step down. Either way, as vacancies begin to appear on the board, the Festival should pause on filling these positions. Downsizing the board to a less unwieldy number is a consideration that might benefit the Festival and make communication easier among all parties.

For the TW/NOLF, it may also be worth taking the time to discuss the potential implementation of set term limits and accountability for board members who neglect their responsibilities. With the above suggestions adding increased clarity on the role of the board, these discussions become possible. If the TW/NOLF makes the decision, even in the long run, to downsize or limit the amount of time board members can serve, it will be key to find new board members who will be great fits for the organization. The Festival should look to the future of the organization when making these selections. If any shifts in patron demographics or profiles begin to materialize, the appointment of a new board member should reflect these shifts and leverage the change. Overall, the Festival, as an arts organization in the vibrant and multicultural city of New Orleans, should certainly set a goal of creating a board that reflects the diversity of both the city and the Festival itself. This will increase its stature in the community and allow it to easily evolve with the times.

Internal Communication

Current meetings among Festival staff are impromptu and do not occur on a scheduled or regular basis. An unexpected meeting could take two or three hours out of a given work day, and, on the other side of the spectrum, weeks might go by without two staff members truly checking in one-on-one. Setting weekly times when each of the staff members has a one-on-one meeting with the others, as well as a general staff meeting once a week, could do wonders for improving productivity. Staff members would know exactly when they would have an opportunity to check in with their coworkers, and they would be able to prepare ongoing questions and topics of discussion throughout the week. While surprise events or crisis situations could certainly break this cycle, leaving day-to-day issues for a scheduled time would significantly decrease interruptions and allow for a smoother workflow. Pre-scheduled meetings also allow for more preparation and reflection, which would make the meetings themselves faster and more productive. A protocol for the method of communication depending on the priority of the event could also be a great addition, thus outlining situations in which a staff member should expect a call versus a text or email.

My second recommendation to improve office communication is for staff members to utilize an online communication tool with pre-established protocols. This could be as simple as deepening the office's use of Google Apps, which is already used by the office for email and Google Drive storage. All staff members could commit to creating detailed and robust Google Calendars to share with their coworkers, which would outline all meetings, personal tasks, and agendas for a given day or week. This would allow staff to easily see how busy their coworkers are on a given day, to determine what meetings are upcoming, and to stay on top of what everyone else is working on.

Google Calendar can also be used as a scheduling tool for the check-ins and meetings mentioned above. Additionally, the G-Chat function in Google could be an excellent tool for intra-office communication. When someone has a quick and simple question, G-Chatting the coworker instead of calling across the office, coming over to someone's desk, and potentially interrupting meetings and workflow would be an easy way to mitigate interruptions. It would also allow staff members to keep up a constant but unobtrusive flow of communication while they focus on their own work. If the use of Google Apps is successful and works well for the staff, they could look into additional apps and online tools and conferencing platforms that could push successful communication even further.

Conclusion

My experience as an intern with the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival over the course of the 2015-2016 year was a rewarding and enriching experience. It was wonderful to contribute to the planning and execution of the 30th Anniversary Festival, a truly landmark event in the history of a resilient and long-lived organization. Moving towards the future, it is key for the TW/NOLF to successfully leverage its longevity and reputation as a cultural festival in a city that lives for attending events. With an influx of young professionals, students, and other creative people from around the country moving to and visiting New Orleans to participate the already-vibrant art scene, the TW/NOLF is poised to secure a spot in the local arts community for years to come.

Of course, a 30-year history brings with itself patterns of organizational stagnation and inertia. The Festival's aging patron base, unwieldy ticketing and event structure, and communication issues among both the board and staff create problems for the TW/NOLF and present a barrier to growth and evolution for the Festival. Still, the organization is aware of the issues it faces and hopes to make changes in all of these areas. With a thoughtful, careful plan of action that pushes slow but steady progress rather than dramatic, immediate change, the TW/NOLF will surely be able to overcome its difficulties and grow as an organization. The majority of individuals involved with the Festival are dedicated and passionate about the Festival's mission, and strive to build a delightful and enriching experience for patrons. If they make a commitment to making needed changes to the organization, the TW/NOLF can surely serve as a landmark community event for years to come.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Staff List and Welcome Letter from Program

Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
President Janet Daley Duval
Vice President—Development Amelia W. Koch
Literary Programming Liaison David Johnson
Theater Programming Liaison Peggy Scott Laborde
Members at Large Jordan Friedman Ted Laborde
Treasurer Terry Verigan
Secretary Mamie Sterckx Gasporecz
Board of Directors Patricia Brady, Ph.D. Beau Bratcher Maureen Detweiler, J.D., Ex Officio William M. Detweiler, J.D., Ex Officio Sharon Donoran Amy Kirk Davison Joel Fredell, Ph.D. David Hoover Susan K. Hoskins Erin Laborde, Ph.D. Henry Lacey, Ph.D. John Lawrence Zachary Lazar Mary Nihil Mitchell, Ph.D. Cher Beth Pison Kim Marie Via Deville, Ph.D. Bonnie Warren Sara W. Woodard
Scholars Conference Chair Robert Bray, Ph.D.
STAFF
Executive Director Paul J. Willis
Director of Literary Programs J.R. Ramakrishnan
Director of Communications & Special Events Tracy Ferrington Cunningham
Festival Publicist Dominique Ellis
Media Advisor Ellen Johnston
Program Assistants Jack Bell Drew Jordan Marian Kaufman, Social Media Maria Plotkina Brook Hansenmann Swire Ruby Tremont
Technical Director Bruce Campbell
Web Master Cherry Cappel
Original Festival Logo Arthur Nead
Cover Design Michael Koolman
Volunteer Coordinator & Special Projects Kareem Kary
Advisory Board Brian Boyles John Kemp Thomas Keith Richard Thomas

WELCOME TO OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL!

We're so happy you can join us for this landmark Festival. We have created five days of events that we hope you will find inspiring and entertaining, as well as nostalgic. You'll notice throughout the print program photos from the past three decades, and we have invited some dear friends back to the Festival to celebrate this milestone with us, such as Dick Cavett, Rick Bragg, John Lahr, Dorothy Allison, and Rex Reed.

To make this weekend even more special, we're honored to be joined by Academy Award-winning actress Estelle Parsons, Mary Badham (nominated for an Oscar for the role of Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*), and Pulitzer Prize winner Beth Henley. Plus, we're welcoming writers making their Festival debut, including Alys Arden, Cynthia Bond, Lisa D'Amour, and Claire Vaye Watkins.

From modest beginnings—a single weekend of programming at Le Petit Theatre in 1987—to more than 75 events taking place throughout the city over five days, we are proud of the Festival we've become. Over the years we've added new components, including our educational outreach, literary late night events, and incorporating the Saints and Sinners Literary Festival, our LGBT event in its 13th year, into the festivities.



Festival Director Paul Willis and Board President Janet Daley Duval

I recently ran across the following quote from Tennessee Williams in an interview from the *Paris Review*: "I'm a poet. And then I put the poetry in the drama. I put it in short stories, and I put it in the plays. Poetry's poetry. It doesn't have to be called a poem, you know." Throughout these 30 years, there have been so many talented artists both on stage and behind the scenes that have made this event possible. Thanks to all of you that have put the poetry in our Festival. We couldn't do it without you, and we look forward to the next 30 years!

Paul J. Willis
Executive Director




EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM: WRITENOW

SUPPORTED BY THE JOE AND DOROTHY DORSETT BROWN FOUNDATION. FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2016.

The Festival offers a day of workshops for New Orleans' young writers through our high school education outreach program, writeNOW. Approximately 150 students from Lusher and the Neighborhood Story Project will participate this weekend. Cynthia Bond, author of the Oprah Book Club pick *Ruby*; Andy Hunter, publisher of Catapult and co-founder of *Electric Literature*; novelist Claire Vaye Watkins (*Gold Fame Citrus*); and cookbook author and poet Caroline Randall Williams will offer students wisdom on the craft and techniques of writing. Students also receive free passes to attend the Festival's events.

As an additional aspect of our student outreach program this year, the Festival is providing NOCCA students an interactive session with Mary Badham on Thursday, March 31, 2016.

Appendix B: Schedule of Events for 2016 Festival



30TH
ANNUAL
TENNESSEE
WILLIAMS /
NEW ORLEANS
LITERARY
FESTIVAL

COLOR KEY/PRICES

INCLUDED IN WEEKEND PANEL PASS (\$75)
 INDIVIDUAL MASTER CLASS (\$25) OR
 INCLUDED IN FULL SERIES PASS WHICH
 ALSO INCLUDES WEEKEND PANEL PASS
 (\$175)
 ONE-DAY PANEL PASS (\$30)
 THEATER (PRICES VARY)
 SPECIAL EVENTS (PRICES VARY)
 WALKING TOURS (\$25)
 SCHOLARS CONFERENCE PASS (\$20)
 SINGLE PANEL PASS (\$10 AT BOX OFFICE)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

Badham, Bragg, and Tennessee
 5:30 P.M.
 Full description, page 9
 Le Petit Theatre/TW's
 Apartment

Queer Cartography: The 2nd Five Posters!
 6 P.M.
 Sidearm Gallery

THURSDAY, MARCH 31				
Historic New Orleans Collection (Master Classes)	Hotel Monteleone	Antenna Gallery	Various Locations (Theater)	Various Locations (Special Events)
Manuscript Agent. Publisher. Book. Readers. 9 A.M. Alys Arden	Ticket Sales 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. Hotel Monteleone, Orleans Room			
Literary Expression in the Digital Age 10:30 A.M. Andy Hunter	Writing Marathon 9 A.M. Queen Anne Ballroom		"Something Unspoken" 1 P.M. Gallier House	
Improvising Order: Process and Freedom in Writing 1 P.M. Tom Piazza		UNO Press Publishing Lab: Book Launch 6 P.M. Antenna Gallery	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> 7:30 P.M. Le Petit Theatre	Tribute to Tennessee Williams the Poet 6:30 P.M. The Jaxson on the River
Sense of Place: Essence of Essay Writing 2:30 P.M. Rick Bragg	Kissed by Tennessee 3 P.M. Queen Anne Ballroom	#TWF16 Fiction Contest Reading 7 P.M. Antenna Gallery	<i>Orpheus Descending</i> 8 P.M. Southern Rep at UNO	Southern Soul Food Steakout 6:30 P.M. Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse

FRIDAY, APRIL 1				
Hotel Monteleone	Hotel Monteleone Queen Anne Ballroom	The Historic New Orleans Collection (Master Classes)	Le Petit Theatre	Various Locations
Ticket Sales 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. Orleans Room		Memory and Family in Fiction 9 A.M. Cynthia Bond		Tennessee Williams Scholars Conference 9 A.M. - 4:15 P.M. Williams Research Center
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 10 A.M. Monteleone Lobby	Writing the Mississippi 10 A.M. Larger than Life: The Biographer's Craft 11:30 A.M.	Lucid Dreaming, Sustaining Story 10:30 A.M. Dorothy Allison	<i>Wit & Wrath: The Life and Times of Dorothy Parker</i> 11 A.M. (theater)	"Something Unspoken" by Tennessee Williams 1 P.M. (theater) Gallier House
	A Conversation with Rick Bragg 1 P.M. Dirty Laundry: Southern Writers on Memoir 2:30 P.M.	Setting Mood 1 P.M. Megan Abbott	<i>He Knew He Would Say It — But Could He Believe It Again?</i> 2:30 P.M. (theater/music)	Weird Tales: World Premiere Production of Tennessee Williams One-Acts 8 P.M. Tennessee Williams Theatre Company of New Orleans at the Metropolitan Community Church
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 2 P.M. Monteleone Lobby	Celebrating 100 Years of the Pulitzer: Tennessee Williams and Contemporary Theater 4 P.M.	A Joy Ride to the Heart of the Subject 2:30 P.M. John Lahr	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> 7:30 P.M. (theater)	<i>Orpheus Descending</i> by Tennessee Williams 8 P.M. (theater) Southern Rep Theatre at UNO
				NOLA Project presents: Literary Late Night By Any Scores Necessary: <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> 10:30 P.M. Cafe Istanbul

SATURDAY, APRIL 2					
Hotel Monteleone	Hotel Monteleone Queen Anne Ballroom	Williams Research Center	Muriel's Jackson Square Restaurant	Le Petit Theatre	Various Locations
Ticket Sales 9 A.M. – 5 P.M. Orleans Room	Writing Marathon 9 A.M.		Breakfast Book Club <i>Go Set a Watchman</i> by Harper Lee 8 A.M.		
Concessions & Souvenirs 9 A.M. – 5 P.M. Orleans Room	Bright Lights, Big Sports 10 A.M.	Orpheus on Screen: Documenting <i>The Fugitive Kind</i> 10 A.M.	New Orleans' Indie Literary Spirit 10 A.M.	"Goat Song" by Tennessee Williams 11 A.M.	<i>Tujague's: The French Quarter's Neighborhood Restaurant With Poppy Tooker</i> 11 A.M. Tujague's
Book Fair 9 A.M. – 5 P.M. Bonnet Carre Room	Terror and Survival in Life and Literature 11:30 A.M.	Deconstructing <i>Orpheus Descending</i> 11:30 A.M.	A Different Kind of Woman: The Complicated, Dangerous, and Unforgettable Women of True Crime 11:30 A.M.		
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 10 A.M. Monteleone Lobby	Shop Talk: Scenes from a Publishing Life 1 P.M.	Tennessee Williams and his Contemporaries 1 P.M.	Crime Fiction as Social Commentary 1 P.M.	<i>He Knew He Would Say it — But Could He Believe It Again?</i> 2:30 P.M.	<i>Orpheus Descending</i> by Tennessee Williams 8 P.M. Southern Rep at UNO
	Estelle Parsons interviewed by Foster Hirsch 2:30 P.M.	A Master of American Short Fiction: Tennessee Williams 2:30 P.M.		Hollywood Happy Hour: Dick Cavett interviewed by Rex Reed 4:30 P.M.	Weird Tales: World Premiere Production of Tennessee Williams One-Acts 8 P.M. Tennessee Williams Theatre Company of New Orleans at the Metropolitan Community Church
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 2 P.M. Monteleone Lobby	Called to Witness: Writers on the Triumphs and Challenges of Testimony 4 P.M.	Southern Literary and Music Trails 4 P.M.		<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> by Tennessee Williams 7:30 P.M.	
	Tennessee's Got Talent 7:30 P.M.			<i>For Whom Southern Belle Tolls</i> with The NOLA Project 10:30 P.M.	

SUNDAY, APRIL 3					
Hotel Monteleone	Hotel Monteleone Queen Anne Ballroom	Hotel Monteleone Royal Ballroom	Palm Court Jazz Café	Hotel Monteleone La Nouvelle	Various Locations
Ticket Sales 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. Orleans Room					<i>Soul Food Love: Caroline Randall Williams in Conversation with Kiese Laymon</i> 11 A.M. 144 Bourbon Street Bourbon House
Concessions & Souvenirs 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. Orleans Room					Writing Marathon Wrap-Up 2:30 P.M. Hotel Monteleone, Gallier Room
Book Fair 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. Bonnet Carre Room	Writing Marathon 9 A.M.				<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> by Tennessee Williams 3 P.M. Le Petit Theatre
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 10 A.M. Monteleone Lobby	Festival Memories/ Remembering Dakin Williams 10 A.M.	In It for the Long Hall: Writers on the Journey 10 A.M.		Staged Reading of the 2016 Festival One-Act Play Contest Winner 11 A.M.	<i>Orpheus Descending</i> by Tennessee Williams 3 P.M. Southern Rep at UNO
	The Power and Politics of New Orleans Voodoo 11:30 A.M.	Rex Reed Interviewed by Peggy Scott Laborde 11:30 A.M.	Blues for Tennessee featuring Tommy Sandton's New Orleans Legacy Band 11:30 A.M.		Stanley and Stella Shouting Contest 4:15 P.M. Jackson Square
Kenneth Holditch Literary Walking Tour 2 P.M. Monteleone Lobby	Storytelling, Memory, and the Civil War 1 P.M.	New New Orleans Writing: A Reading and Discussion 1 P.M.	Boudin: The New Orleans Music Project 1 P.M.	Vieux Carre: On Stage and Behind the Scenes 1 P.M.	Weird Tales: World Premiere Production of Tennessee Williams One-Acts 8 P.M. Tennessee Williams Theatre Company of New Orleans at the Metropolitan Community Church
	1939: Becoming Tennessee 2:30 P.M.	The News that Stays News: Poetry 2:30 P.M.	Singing Along the Mississippi featuring Surpie Barnes 2:30 P.M.	How Not "To Kill a Mockingbird" 2:30 P.M.	

Appendix C: Example of Sponsor Spotlight E-Newsletter



Sponsor Spotlight: Pelican Publishing



Pelican Publishing, located in Gretna, LA, and founded in 1926, is the largest independent trade book publisher in the Southern United States. The company is family-owned and publishes approximately sixty new titles per year in addition to its 2500-title catalog. Pelican Publishing focuses on books that explore local Louisiana culture, including art, cuisine, travel, and history. This year, Pelican Publishing is generously sponsoring the Festival at the Laureate/Literary Partner level.

Membership has its benefits

Join Us as Member for our 30th Anniversary!

There's still time to become a member and support the Festival as it moves towards its landmark year. We've come this far thanks to the generosity of individuals like yourself. Your membership helps us create our program of theatrical, literary, and cultural offerings. In 2016, you'll help us bring in the likes of Dick Cavett, Mary Badham (Scout from the film adaptation of *To Kill A Mockingbird*), Rick Bragg, and many others! In return, benefits for you include free tickets, invites to our VIP party, and much more. You can join at any level [here](#).

The writers among us

Spotlight on some of our published board members



Patricia Brady

Patricia Brady is a writer and historian working in the field of biography. She has written about figures including the very first First Lady, Martha Washington; artist Julien Hudson; and Rachel Jackson, the wife of Andrew Jackson. Her book on Rachel, *A Being So Gentle*, is her most recent work. Patricia worked with The Historic New Orleans Collection as Director of Publications for twenty years. She is currently serving as a lecturer and research associate at Loyola University of New Orleans.

Zachary Lazar

Zachary Lazar, a professor of English at Tulane University, is a celebrated writer known for novels such as *I Pity the Poor Immigrant* (2014) and *Evenings Empire: The Story of my Fathers Murder* (2009). In his work, Lazar blends characters from fiction and reality, including drawing inspiration from figures in his own life, such as his father. In 2015, Zachary was the recipient of the prestigious John Updike Award. In the past, he has been honored as a Guggenheim Fellow, a Hodder Fellow at Princeton University, and a Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown.



Check out all the talented writers on our board:

Patricia Brady: Author of *A Being So Gentle: The Frontier Love Story of Rachel and Andrew Jackson*; *Martha Washington: An American Life*; *Julien Hudson: A Free Artist of Color in Pre-Civil War New Orleans*; and *Nelly Custis Lewis's Housekeeping Book*

John Lawrence: Has contributed writing to the *Louisiana History* journal, the *New Orleans Art Review*, and to a variety of publications and books on the arts and New Orleans history

Zachary Lazar: Author of *Aaron, Approximately*,

Check out all the talented writers on our board:

Patricia Brady: Author of *A Being So Gentle: The Frontier Love Story of Rachel and Andrew Jackson*; *Martha Washington: An American Life*; *Julien Hudson: A Free Artist of Color in Pre-Civil War New Orleans*; and *Nelly Custis Lewis's Housekeeping Book*

Sharon Donovan: Has written for *The New York Times*, *Self*, *W*, *USA Today*, and other publications

David Johnson: Executive Editor of *KnowLA & Louisiana Cultural Vistas* and published journalist

Peggy Scott Laborde: Author of *Lost Restaurants of New Orleans*; *Canal Street: New Orleans' Great White Way*; and *Christmas in New Orleans*

Joel Fredell: Has published academic articles and studies on his research in medieval studies, manuscripts, and digital publishing

Errol Laborde: Editor of *New Orleans Magazine* and *Louisiana Life Magazine*; has written for *Biz Magazine* and other publications; has written books including *Mardi Gras Chronicles of the New Orleans Carnival*

Henry Lacey: Author of the book *To Raise, Destroy and Create: The Poetry, Drama and Fiction of Imamu Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones)*; has published research on Amiri Baraka and other African-American writers

John Lawrence: Has contributed writing to the *Louisiana History* journal, the *New Orleans Art Review*, and to a variety of publications and books on the arts and New Orleans history

Zachary Lazar: Author of *Aaron, Approximately*; *Sway*; *Evening's Empire: The Story of My Father's Murder*; and *I Pity the Poor Immigrant*; has contributed work to *Newsday*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and other publications

Molly Mitchell: Author of *Raising Freedom's Child: Black Children and Visions of the Future After Slavery*; has published scholarly articles on her research on people of color in New Orleans; has contributed essays to *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and other publications

Claire Beth Pierson: Has contributed work to *The Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Journal*, and *The Double Reader Redux*

Kim Vaz Deville: Author of *The Baby Dolls: Breaking the Race and Gender Barriers of the New Orleans Mardi Gras Tradition*

Bonnie Warren: Author of *New Orleans Historic Homes* and *New Orleans Homes at Christmas*; contributing writer for *New Orleans Magazine* and *Louisiana Life*

Sara Woodard: Has contributed writing to *New Orleans Magazine*, *New Orleans CityBusiness*, and the *Times-Picayune*

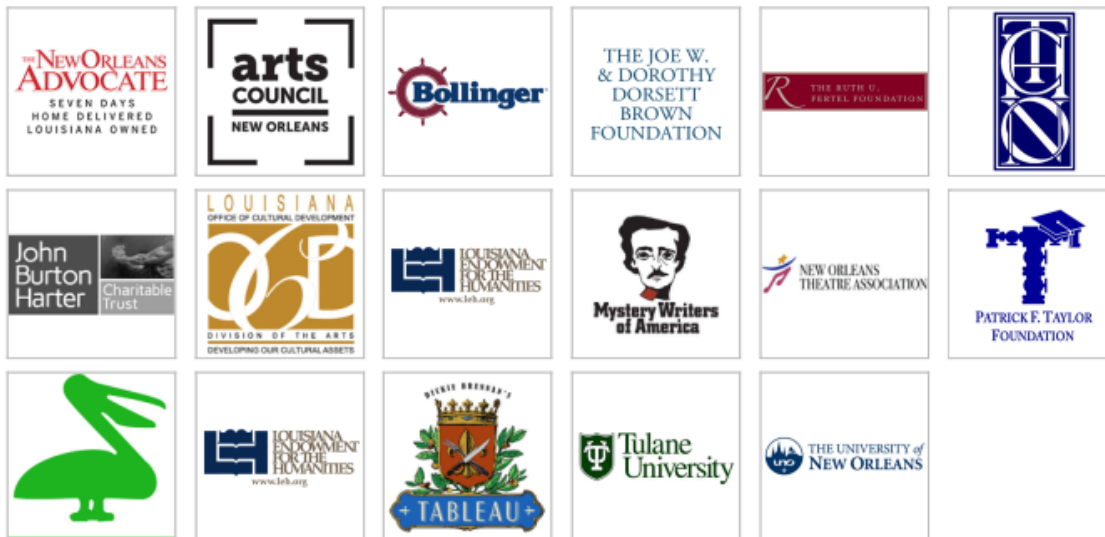
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Appendix D: Example of Marketing E-Newsletter



Celebrating the Literary South

The heart of the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival is the literary South, where our namesake playwright lived and wrote. Each year, when we plan our Festival, we invite both already-beloved authors and emerging writers to create a diverse and engaging event that invokes the same literary culture that inspired Tennessee Williams himself. For our 30th anniversary, we have crafted a truly special weekend that celebrates writers from all walks of life across the South. Between our established Festival favorites and the exciting new authors who have just published for the first time, **you are sure to find a writer who inspires your own literary spark.**



The Best of the South You Know and Love

Alabama native, author, and Pulitzer-winner **Rick Bragg** will be [interviewing Mary Badham](#), the child star who personified the iconic Scout, the beacon of Southern social consciousness in the film adaptation of Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* (Wednesday, March 30 at 6:30 pm); offering his thoughts on shaping the geography of narrative in his [Master Class "Sense of Place"](#) (Thursday, March 31 at 2:30 pm); discussing his new book *My Southern Journey* (Friday, April 1 at 1 pm), and going over memoir in ["Dirty Laundry: Southern Writers on Memoir"](#) (Friday, April 1 at 2:30 pm).

Festival favorite novelist **Dorothy Allison** will be part of our all-star [Tennessee Williams the Poet Tribute Reading](#) (Thursday, March 31 at 6:30 pm); teach a [Master Class on "Lucid Dreaming, Sustaining Story"](#) (Friday, April 1 at 10:30 am); discuss memoir on ["Dirty Laundry: Southern Writers on Memoir"](#) (Friday, April 1 at 2:30 pm), and offer views on maintaining a literary life in ["In it for the Long Haul: Writers on the Journey"](#) (Sunday, April 3, 10 pm).

New Must Reads from All Over the South

The following authors will be on panels throughout the Festival weekend:

Cynthia Bond, debut novelist of *Ruby*. "I have never read a book like this before," Oprah said of the novel, which she chose for her Book Club. Check out the interview [here](#).

Big Freedia, the bounce star who was recently on Beyonce's new track "Formation," will discuss her memoir *Big Freedia: God Save the Queen Diva* and Southern memoir.

Kiese Laymon, author of the novel *Long Division* and essayist for the likes of ESPN. Check out his recent article, ["How They Do in Oxford"](#) [here](#).

Margaret Eby, author of *South Towards Home: Travels in Southern Literature*, which was [reviewed in the New York Times Book Review](#) by the paper's former executive editor Howard Raines.

Caroline Randall Williams, poet and author (with her mother Alice Randall) of *Soul Food Love: Healthy Recipes Inspired by One Hundred Years of Cooking in a Black Family* was recently named by ["50 People Who Are Changing The South"](#) by [Southern Living](#).

New Orleans Chroniclers

We strive to support local authors. Here's a partial list of New Orleans writers you'll will be hearing from at the Festival:

Jerry Ward Jr. - [Poet and Richard Wright scholar](#) who calls the Mississippi Delta his home.

Kent Wascom - Former winner of our Fiction Contest and author of the novel *Secessia*. Check

Kent Wascom - Former winner of our Fiction Contest and author of the novel *Secessia*. Check out the [The Washington Post's review of his book](#).

Kristina Kay Robinson - Co-editor of *Mixed Company*, which launched at #TWF15, and author of the *Nation* cover story on the tenth anniversary of Katrina. Read it [here](#).

John Pope - Long-time journalist and author of *Getting Off At Elysian Fields: Obituaries from the New Orleans Times-Picayune*.

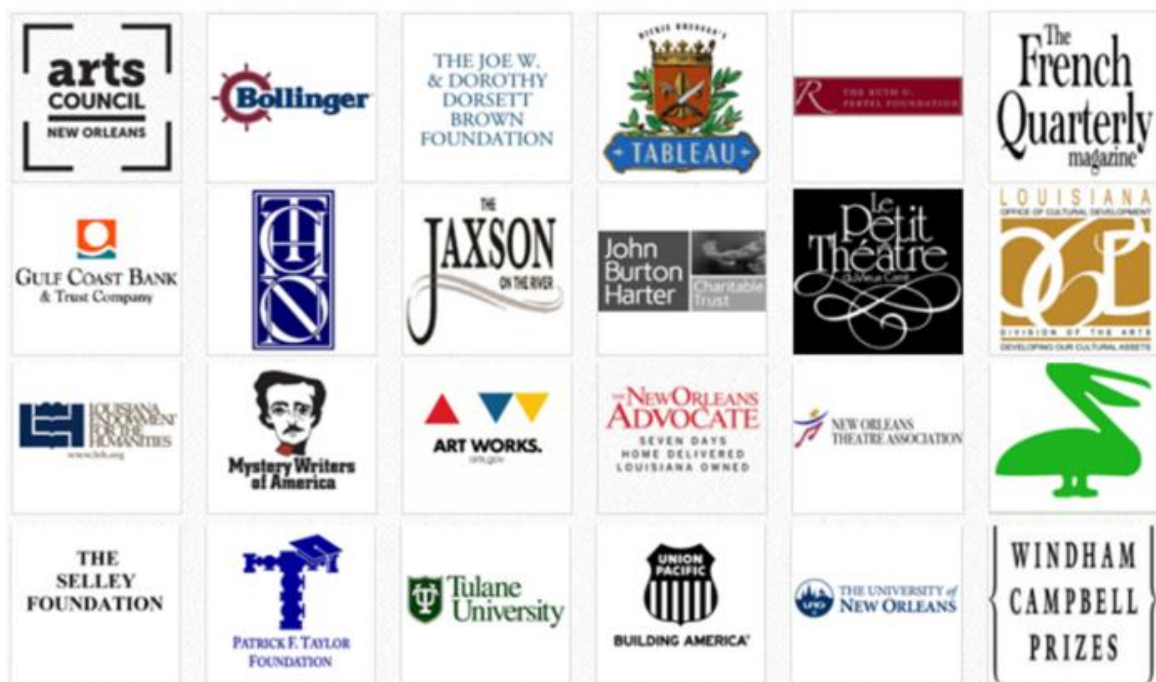
Nicholas Mainieri - Debut author of *The Infinite: A Novel*, forthcoming in Fall 2016 from Harper Perennial.

Michael Allen Zell - Crime fiction writer whose latest is *Run Baby Run*.

Anne Boyd Rioux - Author of *Constance Fenimore Woolson: Portrait of a Lady Novelist*.



PLUS: Kim Vaz-Deville, Peggy Scott Laborde, Alex Rawls, Nancy Dixon, Fatima Shaik, Chris Hannan, Peter Coole, Benjamin Morris, Mark Yakich and others! Please see our [full program here](#) and [speaker list here](#). To purchase tickets for any of our events, please [visit this link](#).



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Appendix E: Example of Marketing Collage



Appendix F: 2015-2016 Projected Budget

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS/NEW ORLEANS LITERARY FESTIVAL

BUDGET 2015 - 2016 FISCAL YEAR

UNAUDITED - MANAGEMENT USE ONLY

	Projected Actual	Budget	Budget
	2014 - 2015	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016
Support and Revenue			
Concessions	3,976	3,500	3,500
Corporate Support	12,850	35,000	39,000
Donations/Misc/Splits	15,381	6,000	7,500
Entry Fees/Contests	19,492	28,500	25,000
Foundation Support	76,200	75,000	84,000
Grants - City	9,355	4,000	8,000
Grants - Federal	15,000	15,000	15,000
Grants - State	9,000	19,000	20,000
Interest Income	2	-	-
Membership TW/SAS	76,194	65,000	84,000
Ticket Sales	88,423	98,500	100,000
Fall Fundraiser	-	-	15,000
University Support	4,250	7,000	4,250
Total revenue and support	330,123	356,500	405,250
Expenses			
Accounting	9,150	9,750	9,750
Advertising	3,379	2,500	5,000
Bank Charges/CC Fees	12,043	17,000	17,000
Casual Labor	7,340	7,500	7,500
Concession Merchandise	3,846	3,000	4,000
Contest Winners	6,950	-	7,000
Dues & Subscriptions	1,194	1,000	1,000
Equipment Rental	-	-	12,000
Hospitality/Entertainment	3,775	6,000	5,000
Insurance - Festival	3,968	3,000	3,200
Miscellaneous Expenses	2,670	1,300	2,300
Office/On Site Supplies	18,835	14,000	4,000
Parking/Auto	5,873	4,500	5,100
Health Insurance	19,991	22,000	25,000
Payroll - Expenses	3,603	3,500	3,500
Payroll - Salaries	126,023	132,000	152,000
Payroll - Taxes	10,100	9,500	11,600
Postage/Courier	2,453	3,000	3,500
Printing	6,754	13,000	13,000
Professional Fees	20,793	18,850	20,000
Rent Office/Venues	9,049	10,680	10,680
Speaker/Actor Fees	19,800	23,000	25,000
Splits (Revenue Sharing)	11,178	2,500	3,000
Telephone	4,924	5,200	5,200
Travel - Air/Transportation	8,141	14,000	14,000
Travel - Hotel	17,803	17,500	17,500
Website/Technology	4,472	10,000	10,000
Total expenses	344,105	354,280	396,830
Net Revenue Over Expenses	(13,982)	2,220	8,420

Vita

Maria Plotkina was born in Sochi, Russia. At the age of six, she moved with her family to Brooklyn, New York. She had a love for the arts from a young age, graduating from the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts in 2010 with a visual arts focus. After that, she attended Stony Brook University in Long Island, New York, where she graduated summa cum lauda in 2014 with a Bachelor's degree in English and Studio Art, also completing a Senior Honors Project in printmaking. She moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, in the summer of 2014, to pursue her Master's degree in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans.